

Berkshire Rugby Union Referees Ltd (Operating as Berkshire Rugby Referees)



Founded 1948

MEMBERSHIP & WELFARE REPORT – SEASON 2025/26

Taking over the Membership & Welfare brief within BRR for the 2025/2026 season, some key objectives were outlined. These included:

- Bringing the membership closer together as a ‘team’
- Making the membership’s voice heard
- Reviewing recruitment and retention of referees

Bringing the membership closer together as a ‘team ‘

One of the key objectives for this season was to bring the membership closer together as a unified team. I’m pleased to report that we made strong progress in this area through a range of social and team-building initiatives across the year.

We began in pre-season by encouraging informal team bonding after fitness sessions, with members regularly gathering at the pub, which was a new initiative reintroduced. This helped establish a positive and inclusive environment early on, allowing both new and existing members to connect. This not only allowed for more members to attend sessions but allowed for an integration opportunity for new members

During the season, we organised a group trip to attend the *Good, Bad & Rugby* live show in Reading. This was attended by 16 members. This provided a great opportunity for members to socialise outside of the usual setting and strengthened relationships across the squad. The feedback was wholly positive with people remarking how good it was to socialise outside a rugby capacity. This is something I will be looking to make a regular fixture going forward.

Additionally, the end of season ‘social’ has been reinstated, which had previously lapsed. This event gives members the chance to come together to celebrate the season’s achievements in a more informal setting, further reinforcing team spirit and camaraderie. This year’s event will be held at Bill’s in Reading and an invite has been extended to +1s to thank partners and those alike for their sacrifice.

This is something that will continue to be worked on in the coming season.

Making the membership’s voice be heard

A key objective this season was to ensure that the voices of our membership were heard and reflected in the direction of BRR. To support this, I distributed several surveys throughout the year to gather feedback, suggestions, and general sentiment from members.

This feedback has already led to tangible outcomes. For example, member input directly influenced the decision to invest in a new pink refereeing shirt, demonstrating our commitment to acting on suggestions raised.

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Survey responses have also highlighted opportunities to improve the structure and engagement of training meetings. As a result, this is currently under review, with efforts ongoing to make these sessions more interactive and valuable for members.

In addition, the feedback process has encouraged greater involvement across BRR, with more members stepping forward to take on responsibilities. This expansion of participation is an ongoing process and represents a positive shift towards a more inclusive and engaged membership base.

Reviewing recruitment and retention of referees

A key objective this season was to improve both recruitment and retention within BRR. To support this, we are currently undertaking a comprehensive review of our recruitment processes to better understand what is working well and where improvements can be made.

As part of this work, Fergus Mackenzie conducted an extensive and highly valuable analysis project focused on recruitment. This has provided clear insights into current challenges & opportunities and has laid a strong foundation for future development.

The findings from this review will inform changes ahead of the upcoming seasons, ensuring that we continue to evolve our approach and strengthen both the attraction of new members and the retention of existing ones.

Recognition

Special thanks to everyone within the membership for all their outstanding contributions to BRR. Special mentions to the following referees and advisors who completed the most appointments this year:

Referee	Advisor
Luke Burch – 49 appearances	David Leavy – 26 appearances
Jamie Payne – 48 appearances	Crispin Davies – 18 appearances
Russ Clark – 35 appearances	Chris Parker – 15 appearances
Fergus Mckenzie – 27 appearances	Nick Curtin – 14 appearances
Billy Bailey – 26 appearances	Peter Kruger & Roger Naish – 10 appearances

Targets for 2026/2027 season

1. Set up a mental health service to support members within BRR
2. Implement new schemes to allow injured and non-officiating referees to be involved at weekends
3. Continue to bring the members closer together as a community

Pre-season will be starting the first week of June. Please make sure you watch out for further communications.

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Thanks for your engagement, support and ongoing involvement as we move into the 2026/27 season

Jamie Payne

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